IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-14 have been amended in the following manner:

1. (Amended) A method for the elimination of spurious signal components (SS) in an input signal (ES), said method consisting of

- the characterization, in a signal analysis phase (I), of signal components of the spurious signal components (SS) and of an information signal (NS) contained in the input signal (ES), and

- the determination or generation, in a signal processing phase (II), of the information signal (NS) or an estimated information signal (NS') on the basis of the characterization obtained in the signal analysis phase (I),

said characterization of the signal components (SS, NS) being performed under utilization at least of auditory-based features (M_1 to M_j).

2. (Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein at least one of the following auditory features (M_1 to M_j) are used for the characterization of the signal components (NS, SS): loudness, spectral profile, harmonic structure, common build-up and decay times, coherent amplitude and frequency modulation, coherent phases, interaural runtime and level differences.

3. (Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein the auditory features (M_1 to M_j) are determined in different frequency bands.

4. (Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein the characterization of the signal components (SS, NS) is performed by evaluating the features (M_1 to M_j)

determined in the signal analysis phase (I), employing a primitive-grouping method.

5. (Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein the characterization of the signal components (SS, NS) is performed by evaluating the features (M_1 to M_j) determined in the signal analysis phase (I), employing a scheme-based grouping technique.

6. (Amended) The method as in claim 5, wherein a hypothesis is established or specified on the nature of the signal component (SS, NS) and is taken into account in the grouping of the identified features (M_1 to M_j).

7. (Amended) The method as in claim 5 or 6, wherein for the characterization of the signal components (NS, SS), at least the auditory features(M_1 to M_j) are grouped along the principles of a gestalt theory.

8. (Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein the signal components identified as spurious noise components (SS) are suppressed and/or the signal components identified as information signals (NS) or estimated information signals (NS') are amplified.

9. (Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein the information signal (NS) or an estimated information signal (NS') is synthesized in the signal processing phase (II) on the basis of the features (M_1 to M_j) detected in the signal analysis phase (I).

10. (Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein with the aid of an analysis of the harmonic structure in the signal analysis phase (I), different base frequencies of the signal component of the information signal (NS) or of the estimated information signal (NS') are extracted and, with the aid especially of a loudness or LPC analysis, spectral levels of harmonics of these signal components are defined, and on the basis of the spectral levels and the harmonics an information signal for tonal speech components is synthesized.

11. (Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein with the aid of an analysis of the harmonic structure in the signal analysis phase (I), nontonal signal components of the information signal (NS) or of the estimated information signal (NS') are extracted and, with the aid especially of a loudness or LPC analysis, spectral levels of these signal components are defined, and with the aid of a noise generator an information signal for nontonal speech components is synthesized.

12. (Amended) The method as in claim 10 or 11, wherein the information signal (NS) and/or the estimated information signal (NS') is amplified.

13. (Amended) Application of the method according to claim 1 for operating a hearing aid.

14. (Amended) Hearing air operating by the method according to claim 1.